

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Jayson-Ann Johnson. I am writing to you on behalf of Bridgeport Prospers/ United Way of Coastal Fairfield County. This organization serves Bridgeport, Monroe, Trumbull, Stratford, Fairfield, Easton, Weston, Westport, Wilton, Norwalk, Darien, and New Canaan.

I am testifying today on the Governor's Proposed Biennial Budget. I urge the committee to include funding for CT Baby Bonds in your final legislation. As an organization with such an expansive footprint, we experience firsthand how wealth disparities affect a person, their family's life, and the neighborhoods in which they live. Bridgeport Prospers, being a part of the cradle to career network, knows that the communities served would benefit from increased help to secure a stable home for their families, invest in higher education which increases their earning potential, or have seed money to get their business idea off the ground! CT Baby Bonds will assist families otherwise incapable of producing generational wealth thus taking a step in the process of closing the racial wealth gap. Every parent wants the best for their child; for them to not have to go through the same hardships they went through. This money, coupled with the financial literacy requirement, allows parents to have hope that their child will be able to follow their dreams without being bogged down with worries about finances.

Let's continue to be a groundbreaking state in action and not just words, as Connecticut was the first state to pass legislation creating baby bonds. It is important that we do not wait to begin investing in an equitable future for our children. Thank you for your time and for your work. I hope you will include funding for CT Baby Bonds in your budget proposal.

Sincerely,

Jayson-Ann Johnson

Manager of Early Childhood Initiatives
Bridgeport Prospers/ United Way of Coastal Fairfield County